

MERCHANTVILLE SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES, NEWS, and AGENDA

Minutes from the last meeting held at Boro Hall on March 21, 2016, news since then, and agenda for the next meeting to be held on Monday April 18, 2016, at 7 pm in Boro Hall, first floor.

Those present March 21 at Boro Hall

Hollis Ryan, John Long, Katherine Swann, Anthony and AJ Perno, and Bob Paulson

Reading of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which appears on the Borough website. Meetings are usually held the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in Boro Hall in the room on the first floor west wing.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

There wasn't a quorum (not 3 members).

Boro Report

The first Council budget meeting was held March 18. Katherine said MSTC will have an increased budget, as a reward for the hazardous tree survey last year. Going forward, MSTC should not pay for tree work (removal, trimming, and planting) for the bike path and Wellwood park, as they have separate budgets.

New Business

3 E Cedar request to remove 2 female ginkgo street trees

Resident Anthony Perno appeared to request that he be allowed to remove 2 female ginkgos, one on E Cedar and one on N Centre, due to the large amounts of spoiling fruits they produce. He offered to pay to have them removed and to plant two appropriate trees (E Cedar has wires and a wide planting strip, N Centre has no wires and a narrower strip). There was not a quorum at the meeting, but subsequent emails gave him permission. He was also asked to consider making an additional contribution to the MSTC Memorial fund at his discretion, as the value of the trees removed exceeds the cost of planting 2 new trees.

Contracted tree work

Hyperion removed 10 trees (9 line items) for \$3000. An additional tree at 210 E Maple was removed for an extra \$450. Three of the trees were in the bikepath, and three were in Wellwood Park. These were included in 10 trees removed for \$3000 (individual trees were not priced). Breaking the \$3000 evenly for 10 trees is \$300 each, so the 3 bike path and 3 Wellwood Park tree are each \$900. So \$900 could come out of the bike path budget and \$900 out of the Wellwood budget.

CC Tree Experts has completed a contract for \$5700 for tree trimming from the AA and A trees in the MSTC Trim sheet. They trimmed 14 trees, 4 of which were on the bike path. See the Completed Work sheet in the Tree_Lists file. Breaking the \$5700 evenly for 14 trees is \$407 each, so the 4 bike path trees are a total of \$1628, which could come out of the bike path budget.

How to deal with tree work on the bike path and in Wellwood Park

Since there are separate budgets for these areas, Council would like the costs to come out of those budgets. It's unclear that funds can be transferred to reimburse MSTC for work already done. Can we ask the other departments to contract the work themselves? How would we do that?

2016 NJDEP Tree Recovery Campaign

John ordered 1000 seedlings, with about 500 going to Dina for distribution to school kids. Roy Adair will pick them up in Gloucester on April 15. Denise Brouse will keep them wet.

Distribution will be Friday April 29.

Ordering trees to plant

Kerry sent a list of suggested planting sites and appropriate trees to purchase. We should decide on this. Also, the Pages would like to order a replacement Ginkgo, which they will pay for.

Arbor Day 2016

Official Arbor Day is Friday April 29. MPWC will plant a tree in Merchantville on that day, and has asked us to suggest a tree and a site. On Saturday April 30, MSTC will meet at the Gazeto at 9:30 to plant a tree and do trimming and clean-up. Ideally school children will be involved, and photos taken.

28 Franklin was topped

Katherine noticed tree work there, and took a photo on March 21. The tree was being topped. MSTC most certainly did not give them permission to do that. (All arborist societies agree that topping is very damaging to the tree.) Fine them \$250?

218 Springfield Ave

The resident, Sam Slattery, had asked permission to remove one of the two CCI street trees in front of his property. It has been over 6 years since they were planted.

Hollis spoke with him. He had cut down the tree without permission, leaving an 8" stump. He claims it raised the sidewalk (less than 1/4") and is near his water and gas lines. It was not near his sewer line.

For cutting down a street tree without permission, he can be fined up to \$250 plus the value of the tree (i.e. the CTE value of the remaining tree). This issue was tabled. Nothing new.

Tree Maintenance Open Issues:

- W Chestnut on the bike path side between Springfield and Morris – two dead trees near cable and phone wires, not electrical – Roy Adair can't remove them – John marked them with Xs – they are "on the bike path" – added to the MSTC Removal list
- 16-18 Merwit Ct – resident thinks the tree is dead – no wires, tree is on the MSTC Trim list – Kerry thinks it is leafing out, and is healthy
- 24 E Walnut Ave, resident request, wires, on the PSE&G Removal list – PSE&G wanted to know which tree it was. It is the left tree when facing the house, the tree nearest the driveway. Roy Adair will tell them.

Watering planted trees

This spring we should revisit getting DPW to use the MSTC water tank to water trees. John will come up with instructions including a list of trees to water, and give them to Steve Volkert, who is the Boro Council supervisor of Public Works. Nothing new.

CORE Training

Kris will attend CORE training in Paramus NJ on April 23.

CSIP sidewalk grant

There are 120 sidewalk citations. Some properties have multiple citations. All were issued at the same time to give residents equal opportunity to apply for a sidewalk grant, as it is unlikely the grant will cover all the work. Under the grant, the State provides \$20,000 and the Boro provides \$5000. Residents hire their own contractor and are reimbursed up to 60% of their cost. Because sidewalks are required to be 4' wide and not curve onto lawns, otherwise healthy trees must be removed. The grant is being administered by Bill Watson, Code Enforcement, under the supervision of Dan Sperrazza, Boro Council. Nothing new.

Recruiting new members

With Kris and Jon Paul joining, there are still two openings.

Kris was to speak with her neighbor Mark about joining.

DPW Tree Work

Nothing new.

Stump Grinding

Roy is now adding stumps as trees are removed and removing stumps as they are ground. There are currently 20 stumps remaining on the list, plus various totem poles.

Roy was not removing totem poles until there was more money for stump removal because he thinks totem poles are less of a tripping hazard than stumps.

Roy would like us to update the stump list, in order to get more funds for stump grinding this year. Nothing new.

PSE&G tree work for us

They want better definition as to which tree to remove at 24 E Walnut, which Roy Adair will provide. Also, their chief looked at the PSE&G Removal list, and told Roy only one of the trees was in primary electric wires, so they would not work on the others. Roy will ask which tree. They also will look at the PSE&G Trim list.

Old Business

Tree Maintenance Decisions, Work Done

- Nothing new

Hazardous branch on private tree

Katherine posed the question regarding a resident (on E. Chestnut) who have a non-borough tree with a hazardous limb hanging over the sidewalk and street. Is there an ordinance that covers this situation? Does it involve the Shade Tree Commission in any way? What are the height limitations for tree branches over the street? MSTC can ask the Code Enforcement officer Bill Watson whether the branches are a hazard based on height. He could then cite the owner to have them removed. . Katherine Swann will ask Bill Watson about this.

MSTC Boro email and voicemail

The MSTC email is accessed at <http://webmail.merchantvillenj.gov/>. The user name is shadetree@merchantvillenj.gov, and the password is blackoak. Bob is currently answering it. The MSTC voicemail is extension 373 at the Boro main mail phone number (856) 662-2474. We voted to have Denise Brouse remove this extension, as no one was answering it.

Tree Inventory

Hollis's new inventory will be accessible from smart phones (iPhone, Android) and tablets (iPad etc). You will be able to view the current inventory and make updates. John received iTree training at the NJ STF meeting. Hollis will get the app working as soon as he can. Nothing new.

Home Depot trees

They are typically marked down by as much as 50% in mid-October. We should try to buy some in 2016. Nothing new.

Memorial Tree Report

The Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund had \$1338.38 as of 11/2/15. This fund contains Shade Tree donations, and can only be used to purchase trees and memorial plaques.

Nancy and Bob Page would like to purchase a tree to replace the dying/dead Ginkgo planted by the bus stop on E Maple by St. Peters by their Jonathan Page memorial plaque. They would like us to get it for them.

MSTC Budget

Budget Committed includes money spent and money we owe as of now. Budget Approved is the budget allocated by the Boro. Only the totals are important. The 2015 approved budget was \$12,000.

For 2015, the MSTC budget was overrun by \$1890. The Memorial Trust fund is separate.

Since it is not possible for a budget deficit to carry over, \$1500 were taken out of Buildings and Grounds and \$390 out of the Clerk's fund. Denise Brouse does not want this to happen again.

The 2016 budget will not be finalized until the spring. In the meantime, we are allowed to spend as necessary. Officially, there is a cap until the budget is finalized, perhaps ¼ of the 2015 budget, i.e. \$3,000.

MSTC Fund*	2015 Budget			2016 Budget		
	Committed	Approved	Remaining	Committed	Approved	Remaining
Tree and Stump Removal, Tree Trimming	\$9500 ^d	\$10,000	\$500	\$6150 ^a		
Purchasing and Planting New Trees	\$3870 ^e	\$1000	-\$2870			
Training and Miscellaneous	\$520 ^f	\$1000	\$480			
Total	\$13,890	\$12,000	-\$1890	\$6150		

*not including Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund

^e2015 Fernbrook Nursery order of 12 trees \$2200

^f2015 NJ Shade Tree Federation dues \$95

^f2015 Arbor Day Foundation dues \$35

^d2015 Hyperion removals (113 Woodbine: \$800; Wellwood trunk \$550) \$1350

^e2015 Elite Landscaping to plant 12 trees \$1670

^d2015 Weldon hanging branch removal \$150

^d2015 Garden State stump grinding \$2000

^d2015 Hyperion removals (9 trees) \$3000 _open, not yet paid

^d2015 CC Tree Expert trimming \$3000 paid

^f 2015 NJ STF meeting attendance – 2 people for 2 days \$390 paid

^a2016 Hyperion removal (1 additional) - \$450

^a 2016 CC Tree Experts trimming - \$5700

Next Meeting after April 18: May 16, 2016 (third Monday) 7 pm in Boro Hall.

Respectfully submitted by: Bob Paulson, secretary